GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4135
ANSWERED ON:10.04.2003
POLICY ON EXHIBITION OF NEWS/DOCUMENTARIES FILMS IN CINEMA THEATRE
UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) Whether every cinema theatre has to make arrangements for compulsory screening of approved news/documentaries films before the screening of the main feature film in the theatre;

(b) if so, the details of the policy and when it was first initiated;

(c) whether the compulsory exhibition of such films is not an unreasonable restriction on the right of the exhibitors to carry on their business;

(d) if so, the need/benefits accrued to the public with continuance of this practice;

(e) whether the Government are considering to change the said policy and yet reserve the power as a residual power to use whenever necessary; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and steps proposed to change archaic laws in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) & (b) Section 12(4) of the Cinematograph Act, 1952 empowers the Central Government to issue directions to ensure that scientific films, films intended for educational purposes, films dealing with news and current events, documentary films or indigenous films secure an adequate opportunity of being exhibited, in so far as the cinema houses located in the Union Territories are concerned. Similar provisions exist in various State cinema laws/regulations.

(c) & (d) Hon`ble Supreme Court in an Order dated 15.7.1999 in CivilAppeal Nos. 3766-67 of 1999 − Union of India & OthersVersus The Motion Picture Association & Others − has, inter-alia,held that `requiring an entertainment medium like cinema theatre to show for a short duration of its programme, films which educate and impart information cannot be considered as an unreasonable restriction on the right to carry on business.`

(e) Not at present, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.